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REVOLUTION'S GIANT.

JOHN CLARK RIDPATH'S ESTIMATE THE COMTE DE MIRABEAU.

Character of the Great Revolutionist. His Place in the States General and the

(Copyright, 1891, by American Press Association.) them all was Mira-beau! We of this age should have seen him on that first Saturday of May, 1789, as he marched with the 800 delegates to the Hall of the Menus, in Versailles. It is the day of the as-sembling of the states general, to begin the regener ation of France, and if of France,

Among those 600 depuof the Third Estate no such other was there as Gabriel Honoré Riquetti de Mirabeau. He was delegate from Aix, where his previous life had been notorious and unique—a strange mix ture of crime and generosity and as-piration. From his childhood he had been more like one of the persons of an old Greek tragedy than like a living man of the Eighteenth century. Even as a boy his passions were as thunder and lightning roaring and striking in the forest. He was perhaps the most uncontrolled and uncon-trollable being of his age. Neither with his own family nor with the people of his provençal town could be get on in any kind of peace. He was always in rebellion and

struggle and conflict.

The grandfather of Mirabeau was nicknamed Old Silverstock. He, too, had been
a fighter of great fame. In one battle, at the bridge of Casano, he stood and fought until he was gashed with twenty seven saber wounds. Then falling in his place, with a camp kettle placed over his head by one of his men, he lay there while the cav-alry of Prince Eugene galloped back and forth over him—lay there, not to die, but to get up and be the father of men, among the rest of this Gabriei Riquetti.

Mirabeau was born at Bignon, close to Nemours, on the 9th of March, 1749. He was forty years and two months old when the states general convened. He was bat-tered and scarred already by almost every kind of violence and excess. He had been exceriated with the smallpox- disfigured thereby till he became an object of loathing even to his father, a man not unlike him-self in temper. The father was the Mar-quis Victor de Mirabeau, and he fain would have brought his son up to greatness. But the latter was, as surly Carlyle has expressed it, the "roughest lion's whelp ever littered of that rough breed. It is in vain," says he, "oh, marquis! This cub, though thou flay him or slay him, will not learn to draw in the dogcart of political economy

All the early life of this man was a scene of disorder and misery. What should he do at length but marry Mile. de Maragnane, a rich heiress of Aix? And what then but rush ahead, in spite of his own resources and hers, and get into debt to the extent of 300,000 livres—like a mad-man? The old marquis, his father, said he was mad, and swore to it, and procured against him a writ of lunacy, and had him shut up, as a sort of stay against his debts. Hereupon the enraged Gabriel left Aix and settled at Manosque, until, on account of a quarrel, he was imprisoned in the castle of If. That, oh, reader, is a significant name, that If! As though a man should be jailed in a hypothesis! If you can keep him there! If he does not get away and become a deputy to the states general and turn the world upside down! But between this and that lie many epicals.

sodes. The passions of Mirabeau drove him as the cyclone drives the leaf. At length, in Franche Comte, he made the ac-quaintance of the beautiful wife of the president of the Parliament of Besançon. Her name was Sophie de Ruffey, Marchion-ess of Monier. With her he fell in love, and she with him, and when the affair was out they fled to Holland. Cause was had against him. He was tried, convicted, condemned, and was beheaded-that is, by proxy. This is to say that the wise and vindictive court had an effigy made of Gabriel, and that was beheaded, but not he, which would have been a more serious

Matter.
As the revolution came on the event seemed to open to Mirabeau—for he was now returned to his native city—a field exactly suited for his stormy activities. He would fain be a delegate to the states general. Of course he was now the Comte de Mira beau, a nobleman by birth and natural rep resentative of the aristocracy, but the aristocracy of Provence would have none of him The nobles of the south spewed him out. But that does not signify, for we will be elected anyhow. We will become one of the Commons, one of the Third Estate. But in order to do this we must be engaged in some industrial pursuit. Therefore we hire an old warehouse and put up over the door this inscription, "Mirabeau, the Woolen Draper." So we are an artisan, and when the election is held we are the candi-date of the Third Estate for Aix, and are elected, greatly to the joy of the populace. Thus at the states general was this extraordinary character pitted against the aris-tocracy and the king. Already in the pro-cession he was pointed out as the coming leader. The snarling old father had said of him that he was nothing but reflex and echo, composed of two clattering jawbones and a vacant head. Here, however, we find it greatly different. From the first day he was leader of the great assembly. He only had in him the daring and the native kingship necessary to overawe and command such a body of men. As he took his seat on the front bench reserved for the Third Es-tate he glanced at the king, who sat in his crown jewels under the canopy at the other end of the hall, and said to those about him, "Behold the victim already adorned!" In the gallery on the opposite side above, next to the wife of Montmorin, the minister of foreign affairs, sat Germaine Necker, afterward known to the world as Mme. de Staël. She caught a glance of Mirabeau, pointed him out to the minister's wife, and almost shouted with delight at the sight of such a flerce visaged tiger among the Com-mons. More Montmorin responded, "You must not rejoice, for not only France shall suffer for this but we ourselves." Pro-

massacre. Her eldest daughter died in jail, and the youngest of a broken heart! As for Mme. de Staël, she shall indeed re-joice for a season: but after that? Twenty On the fist of last January it was

phetic words they were, too, for Mme, de Montmorin fell with one of her sons under the guillotine. Another son was drowned. Her husband was killed in the September

hundred years since Mirabean became president of the national assembly. Al-ready he had become the king of men-like Agamemnon. Already France was in the threes of that mighty revolution by which all things have been transformed and made anew. Already from the crater of the volcano vast masses of cinders and lava were pouring forth floods of molten bitumen, clouds of sulphurous smoke and all the scoria of the Middle Ages. In the midst of the universal confusion and down rushing of things it had become strangely apparent that Mirabeau was the one man who might still control the tempest. By his birth and antecedents he was al-

lied with the aristocracy. At the begin-ning he was very far from being a radical revolutionist as it respected the monarchy. Perhaps to the day of his death he was not convinced that the monarchy must go, not convinced that the monarchy must go, or that even the king must go. His attitude of hostility and implacable battle with the ruling powers of France had been the result of the disparagement to which he had been subjected by his own order, the nobility. But meanwhile broader democratic principles had taken possession of his mind. He had become profoundly sympathetic with the Third Estate, and was ready to declars with the most pronounced. ready to declare with the most pronounced radical that the French nation "consisted of the Third Estate without the nobility

or the clergy." In this complexity of forces, putting back one party with one hand and the other with the other, he went forward like Samson, pulling up the very gate posts of power and becoming the autocrat of the assembly and the people of France. The court trembled before him. The clergy were obsequious. Marie Antoinette, from hating and deriding him, had sought an interview, and was considering the ques-tion of making him minister of state. The commons looked to him with confidence and applause. His name echoed around Europe. When titles were abolished he still would retain his. He would be called Mirabeau and not the Citizen Riquetti. In the assembly he said one day with in-finite sarcasm. "You have now for three days set all Europe at cross purposes with your Riquetti!"

This tremendous ascendancy over France and the revolution itself Mirabeau re-tained to the day of his death. It came to be believed that the cloud compelling Titan could really outride the storm, and when it was known that the storm within him was about to prevail, that the terrible surge and swell of his volcanic spirit were about to break in death, a feeling of universal alarm pervaded all circles of society. His prodigious activities and burning pas-sions had at length conspired to do what opposition and enmity, the hatred of man and even the disgust of nature, had been unable to accomplish. He continued in the presidency of the assembly for two months, but in the last days of March, 1794, it became evident that the end was at hand.

But the prodigy was greatest at the last, On the 27th of the month Mirabeau, on his way to the assembly hall, fainted and fell by the road. Meanwhile, though he presently recovered himself and went to his place flashes of fire-strange visionary gleams of things unseen to natural vision-began to dart before his eyes, and the roar of the blood river rose ever higher in his brain, like the surge of an ocean. He seemed to be burning up in the flames. His speech became wild and not wholly of earth. Phantasmal specters entered his room and sat about his bed. His thoughts shot like meteors across the skies of memory and imagination. "In my heart," said he, "I carry the death dirge of the French monarchy; the dead remains of it will now be the spoil of the factions."

Perceiving that Paris held her breath for the event of his going forth, and hearing the cannon boom outside, he said, "Is the funeral of Achilles prepared already?" His faculties lost nothing of their brilliancy. In the early dawn of April 2 he roused himself from his sufferings and



said cheerfully to his physician, Cabanis: 'My friend, I shall die today. When one has come to such a crisis there remains only one thing to be done; that is, to be perfumed, crowned with flowers and soothed with music, in order to enter sweetly into that slumber from which there is no awaking." A friend supported his head. "Yes," said he, "support that head. I would I could bequeath it to thee." Again when the sun shone into his room he said, "If he is not God, he is at least his cousin." Finally, when he had begged for opium and they would give him none, he murmured, "Dormir. dormir." "To sleep, to sleep!")

Behold the image of this man-flerce in his aspect, a veritable lion's whelp; heavy. but not tall; coarse and strong; a man of iron, with liquid fire in his veins; a head and face to which he himself was fond of referring as the head and visage of a boar: tusks in his jaws that gleamed through the foam as he spoke. Opposed in the as sembly he was wont to say, "I will show them la hure"—that is, the boar's head, meaning his own! His hair was an indescribable mass, growing thickly around his brow, and flung back more like the mane of an African lion than the hair of a man. His voice was as the echo of thunder and his oratory as the storm. Every

thing bent or broke before it! Mirabeau's outgoing from life let in all the floods. Chaos came roaring from every hand. From that day discord, tumult, violence, audacity and blood rushed swiftly in and mixed and mingled in the arena. From that day the fate of the ancient mon archy was scaled. From that day Napoleon Bonaparte was possible. From that day the fiery revolution must run its own wild course, until society be born anew out of the furnace and the seeds of the future be-gin to germinate and spring from the reno-vated soil of France.

JOHN CLARK RIDPATH.

The wife of a soldier and six times married is the record of Mrs. Catherine Restimier, now in custody at San Francisco for disturbing the peace

More tobacco is produced in Wisconsin than in any other of the United States. The crop of last year aggregated nearly 24,000,000 ,ounds.

EL PORTICO GAVOTTE.

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